

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 3 and ending at page 10, line 14 as follows:

FIG. 3 shows an example of the contents of the host system database 22. For clarity, the information has been grouped under two data tables: the store table which contains data related to the merchant's store, and the inventory table which contains data related to the inventory items that are made available to the host system by the merchant. In FIG. 23, numeral 300 denotes an area for storing the store identification number. Each store participating in the distribution system is given a unique number to be used for indexing. Numeral 301 in FIG. 3 denotes the store's address and numeral 302 denotes the store's name. When the in-store system communicator 11 is started, it sends a message to the host system communicator 21 to identify the originating store and its network address. The host system communicator 21 stores the network address and the time when the connection is made in the areas denoted by numeral 303 and numeral 304 respectively. Additional information may be stored in this table, such as the store's phone and fax numbers, login name and password, etc.